United Nations A/62/7/Add.34

General Assembly

Distr.: General
27 February 2008

Original: English

Sixty-second session
Agenda items 65 and 128

Report of the Human Rights Council

Programme budget for the biennium 2008-2009

Revised estimates resulting from resolutions adopted by the Human Rights Council at its sixth session and its fifth special session in 2007

Thirty-fifth report of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions on the programme budget for the biennium 2008-2009

1. The Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions has considered the report of the Secretary-General on revised estimates resulting from resolutions adopted by the Human Rights Council at its sixth session and its fifth special session, in 2007 (A/62/671). During its consideration of the report, the Committee met with representatives of the Secretary-General, who provided additional information and clarification.

2. As indicated in the report, at its sixth session and its fifth special session, the Human Rights Council adopted a number of resolutions by which it authorized relevant human rights bodies and special procedures to continue or undertake additional activities in excess of the resources approved in the 2006-2007 programme budget and the initial proposals of the Secretary-General for the biennium 2008-2009.

3. For 2006-2007, related net additional requirements amounting to $719,100 have been met within the resources appropriated under the programme budget for the biennium 2006-2007 and reported in the second performance report.

4. Requirements for 2008-2009 are estimated at $2,916,000. The Advisory Committee was informed that, of that amount, $2,449,300 had been included in the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2008-2009 in accordance with the agreed procedure on perennial activities, which was established in consultation with the Committee in the biennium 1986-1987 to deal with resource requirements resulting from decisions of the Commission on Human Rights, as endorsed by the Economic and Social Council (see A/40/6, sect. 23, paras. 23.12 and 23.13). That

08-25433 (E) 290208

procedure was subsequently formalized by the General Assembly in resolution 41/213. According to the procedure, provisions for activities of a perennial nature are included in the proposed programme budget on the basis of past experience.

5. As indicated in the summary of the report of the Secretary-General, it is envisaged that the balance of $466,700 required for 2008-2009 will be accommodated, to the extent possible, from within the existing appropriations for the biennium 2008-2009. Accordingly, no additional appropriations are requested at this time. During the biennium, the General Assembly will be provided with a consolidated statement of requirements arising from the continuing review by the Human Rights Council of its subsidiary machinery in accordance with Assembly resolution 60/251 (see A/62/671, para. 91). The consolidated statement will include information on the potential absorptive capacity of the programme budget for the biennium 2008-2009 under the amended programme of work. Upon enquiry, the Advisory Committee was informed that the Council's review of its subsidiary machinery should be completed in June 2008 and that the consolidated statement would be submitted to the General Assembly in late 2008 or early 2009.

6. A summary of requirements resulting from the resolutions adopted by the Council at both its fifth special session and its sixth session, which is provided in the annex to the report of the Secretary-General, includes:

- Requirements accommodated within approved appropriations and reported in the second performance report for 2006-2007
- Requirements to be accommodated from the existing appropriation for 2008-2009
- Requirements to be reported in the consolidated statement

7. During its review of the report, the Advisory Committee exchanged views with representatives of the Secretary-General on the procedure currently being used to report to the General Assembly the requirements emanating from resolutions and decisions adopted by the Human Rights Council. Revised estimates resulting from decisions of the Council's predecessor, the Commission on Human Rights, once adopted by the Economic and Social Council, were reported to the General Assembly in the context of revised estimates resulting from resolutions and decisions of the Economic and Social Council. The Advisory Committee was informed that, upon the establishment of the Human Rights Council, the Secretariat initially considered that the procedure for handling its reports should be similar to that followed for the Economic and Social Council.

8. However, it is pertinent to recall that the Human Rights Council is mandated to meet regularly throughout the year and to schedule no fewer than three sessions per year, as well as special sessions when needed. In fact, the report contained in document A/62/671 represents the fifth report on revised estimates resulting from resolutions and decisions of the Human Rights Council since the Council's first session, in June 2006. The coherent presentation and intergovernmental review of such revised estimates thus present a challenge. **While the Committee understands that the procedure followed thus far represents an effort at transparency on the part of the Secretariat, it notes that this procedure contributes to a piecemeal approach to budgeting for the requirements resulting from resolutions and decisions of the Council. The Committee is therefore of the view that the procedure for presenting to the General Assembly the financial requirements**

arising from the resolutions and decisions of the Human Rights Council should be improved. The Assembly may wish to request that the Secretary-General make proposals in this regard in time for the Committee to consider them in the context of its review of the consolidated statement.

9. **The Advisory Committee recommends that, at the present stage, the General Assembly take note of the estimated requirements of $2,916,000 for 2008-2009 on the understanding that such appropriations as may be necessary will be requested by the Secretary-General in the context of a consolidated statement of requirements arising from the continuing review by the Human Rights Council of its subsidiary machinery, which is to be submitted to the Assembly upon completion of the review (see para. 5 above). In accordance with rule 153 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly, the Human Rights Council should continue to be provided with statements of programme budget implications prior to the adoption of resolutions.**